THE
CANADIAN
INSTITUTE OF
STRATEGIC
STUDIES

SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

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SECURITY

AND

SOVEREIGNTY

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THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES

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SUMMARY

● The first and most important service that a government must provide is the security of the country and its people. Military security is an essential element of that security.

● The primary security interest of Canada is a stable international order.

● The Canadian government must ensure that Canada can exercise sovereign authority and control over all its territory, air space and waters. The Canadian Armed Forces continue to be the most effective instrument for this task.

● Only through continued membership in defensive security alliances such as NATO and NORAD and in continued participation in peacekeeping, peace restoration and peace building will Canada be able to maintain its own security.

● The Department of National Defence and the Department of External Affairs must be provided with the resources necessary to carry out the tasks allocated by the government, and to fulfill the commitments made to the Canadian public and to allied nations.

● An important element of security and sovereignty is the development of a national industrial base which is capable of ensuring that the country is not vulnerable in times of emergency through denial of access to strategic materials, or other critical military goods, for whatever reason. Canada is now vulnerable and must take measures to reestablish that capability to the greatest extent possible.

● The present system of infrequent Department of National Defence and Department of External Affairs White Papers ought to be replaced by an annual comprehensive appraisal of the international security environment, how it affects Canada's foreign and defence policy and the methods by which the policies will be pursued. Only in that way will there be a common Canadian view upon which to base future actions.

CISS MANDATE

To ensure that the CISS continues to carry out its mandate of stimulating informed discussion of these vital issues, it will:

1. Continue to conduct seminars twice-yearly; one in the spring on a topic of high interest and the second in the autumn on "The Canadian Strategic Forecast". The latter is the only one of its kind in Canada which sets out annually the present strategic situation and provides key indicators and guidelines for the consideration of future scenarios. The proceedings of the seminars are published in book form;

2. Widen the scope of discussions by beginning publication of "The McNaughton Papers" in 1990, a monograph series which, in each issue, will consider in depth a subject of strategic importance to Canada. The series is named for and dedicated to the memory of General A. G. L. McNaughton, distinguished Canadian scientist, soldier, politician and diplomat; and

3. Following the successful establishment of The McNaughton Papers, The Institute will strive to initiate "The Canadian Journal of Strategic Studies" — a refereed journal devoted to articles concerning national and international strategic issues.

BACKGROUND

In the past ten years a series of events has taken place which has justified the determination of the Western democratic countries to stand firmly together in the face of a persistent threat from the Eastern Bloc nations and to take the collective actions necessary to ensure the security of their citizens and their territorial homelands.

Notwithstanding the continuation of many conventional conflicts in several regions of the world, there has been no outbreak of world-wide war. This positive situation is due, in large measure, to the existence of effective defensive alliances such as NATO and the successful application of the strategy of deterrence and defence.

The maintenance of effective strategic and conventional forces and the deployment of intermediate range nuclear missile systems in Western Europe in 1983 in the face of threats and intimidation by the USSR demonstrated Alliance resolve and solidarity and brought dramatic results. Where previous and frequent attempts to negotiate reductions in the large Soviet arsenal of intermediate range weapons had failed, firm resolve and implementation of the "two-track" decision resulted not in the calamitous scenario forecast by some, but in an agreement which will achieve the eventual removal and destruction of all such weapons.

This effective and coherent alliance defence has produced a significant shift in the strategic approach of the USSR and WTO countries. Mr. Gorbachev has acknowledged that to achieve his goal of bringing the Soviet Union into the 21st century as an effective superpower, the USSR had to alter its policies and move in directions which were more suited to improving relations with the West and lowering the tensions which were placing unsupportable demands on the USSR economy. This realization has resulted in the USSR and WTO agreeing to negotiate on the basis of a wide range of Western proposals in the field of arms control and disarmament.

Although the recent initiatives of Presidents Bush and Gorbachev hold out much promise, the road to an effective set of agreements and their implementation is long and fraught with difficulties. Foremost among these is the need

for the development of effective systems for international verification and accountability which will satisfy the security concerns of individual nations and their citizens and which will adhere to the principles of verification established by the United Nations, due in large part to the work of Canada.

It must also be recognized, however, that even if there is success in negotiation and implementation of such arms control agreements, the maintenance of effective NATO and other alliance armed forces and the strategy of deterrence will continue to be of the utmost importance to the sustainment of international stability and international and national security. For this reason and to ensure effective participation in international verification activities, Canada will need to maintain general purpose armed forces with the professional capabilities, experience and knowledge which merit the confidence of NATO, WTO, and other nations.

Moreover, the process of dynamic political change which is taking place in Eastern Europe is not without its risks and consequences. While the movements toward reform in the USSR and some Warsaw Pact countries are welcome, we must realize that they can also be highly destabilizing. As is already evident there has been a reawakening of nationalism in many areas; religious fervour is on the rise; and USSR and other eastern European authoritarian governments are being buffeted by repeated, forceful challenges and demands for greater democracy.

Concurrently, in other parts of the world and in our own hemisphere, we are being confronted with a number of non-military challenges which affect national and international security. The illegal production, distribution and use of narcotics has assumed epidemic proportions and has resulted in the massing of enormous fortunes and power in irresponsible hands. Threats to the environment abound. Many of the less-developed countries are immobilized by their massive national debts, while their populations grow in an unbalanced manner putting increasing pressures on scarce accommodation and food supplies. Problems of living in a crowded world made all the smaller by the marvels of contemporary communications facilities are increasing as disparities are becoming evident and unrest is stimulated. Consequently, the scale and scope of regional conflicts has been expanding and new demands for instant resolution have led to a renaissance of United Nations and other peacekeeping efforts.

At the same time, the anticipated coalescence in 1992 of the European Economic Community and the movement of other states to establish trading blocs may be perceived as new threats to the economic security of trade-dependent nations.

Given this wide range of factors, concerns and problems, Canadians need to give serious attention to the overriding question:

HOW CAN CANADIAN SECURITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE BE PRESERVED IN AN INCREASINGLY INTERDEPENDENT WORLD?

The goal of a national security policy must be understood by both the government and the people. It concerns the protection of our national assets — our land, our resources, our physical structures, and our people, as well as our national values of democracy, personal freedom, social justice and economic well-being in an increasingly competitive and confrontational world environment.

Assuring the security of Canada is a particular challenge. We are geographically the second-largest country in the world, bounded by three oceans, with the longest coastline in the world. We are situated between the two nuclear-armed superpowers. But demographically, we rank only 31st in the world in population and third lowest in population density. Economically, we have the eighth largest economy in the world and our people enjoy a standard of living rated among the top two or three countries. We are an active trading nation and are highly dependent on external trade for our standard of living.

With the recent conclusion of the Canada-USA free trade agreement, the events to take place in Europe in 1992 which some predict will have a greater impact than the free trade agreement, and the rising industrial capacity in the Pacific Rim, great care will have to be taken to ensure that our rank in the list of the world's great trading nations does not fall. Special attention will need to be paid to the Pacific. It has been said that Canada discovers the Pacific area every ten years or so and, after a brief flurry of activity returns to its fascination with Europe. The "brief flurry of activity" needs to be increased and maintained if we are to continue to have economic security.

Canada's First Security Interest

Despite the size and complexity of our situation, our allocation of resources to national security is very low. Among the 16 countries of NATO, we are second lowest in terms of the percentage of GNP that we devote to national security. This figure gives some idea of the difficulty facing defence and security planners in Canada. Maintaining the security posture which ensures effective sovereignty — that is, the capability to exercise our national authority over our land, territorial waters and airspace — is a special challenge. Because of our economic dependence on our resource industries, agriculture and fisheries, the effective exercise of sovereignty is indeed an important issue.

With our land mass as large as it is and our population so small, we are unusually dependent upon the recognition and application of international law. Situated as we are between the superpowers and having infinitely more in common with the USA than with the USSR, the defence of North America and the North Atlantic and North Pacific Regions is of vital importance to us. It is clear that, as the late John Holmes constantly reminded us, Canada's first and foremost security interest is the maintenance of a stable international order.

For many, the mention of international stability will bring immediately to mind United Nations peacekeeping forces, for which Canada has become justifiably renowned. International stability, however, starts at home. Any nation has a responsibility to its people and to global order not to be so weak so as to appear so vulnerable in any area, or be perceived to be unable or unwilling to protect its own interests that it invites interference in its affairs or breaches of its sovereignty by other nations. This not only affects the country and its national assets directly, but it also erodes international law and international stability. It is for this reason that the very minimum that Canada must be seen to be capable of providing in its own defence is a policing of its territory, waters and airspace — and the approaches thereto — to detect, track, identify, and intercept intruders.

Such is now not the case. To continue to fail to do so could invite opposing powers to use Canadian territory, waters, or airspace and thereby come in conflict with one another. The consequences for Canada are easily imaginable. We need to be able to stand up for our national interests. If we are to be able to stand up for our national security interests, it is simply unacceptable to consider asking other countries to tell us what is happening in Canada or to protect our sovereignty. That itself would be a loss of sovereignty.

There are, however, areas of mutual interest with neighbouring or regional nations in which the pooling of surveillance and control resources on a partnership or multilateral cooperative basis can maximize the security benefit to be realized by application of combined resources without seriously impinging on our sovereignty.

Canada and Co-operative Arrangements

Since the maintenance of security in the modern era is seen to be generally beyond the capacities of any one country, we have found it in our national interest to enter into bilateral agreements and multilateral arrangements with like-minded nations to achieve the highest level of collective security. Consequently, Canada must in its own security and defence interests, seek cooperative arrangements such as NATO and NORAD with like minded nations to contribute to international stability, the prevention of war and the creation of a more peaceful world. Our membership in these multi-lateral and bi-lateral defensive alliances and agreements and in the United Nations has served us well and has cost much less in financial, economic and political terms than if we did not belong. If these alliances break down, our vulnerability will be greatly increased.

For 40 years, Canada has viewed the East-West military confrontation in Europe and in the North American area as the main potential source of a breakdown in stability which could cause a strategic superpower nuclear exchange which could destroy Canada. Although the probability of such an event has been dramatically reduced in recent years, the possibility remains. Canada must, therefore, in the interests of its own surivival, continue to contribute to the maintenance of the military balance on the one hand, and the achievement of verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements on the other.

To make immediate changes in the Canadian defence posture in Europe and in Canada on the assumption that these agreements will be realized and will come into force overnight could, in itself, be destabilizing and not conducive to the kind of reductions in both tensions and levels of arms that are in Canada's long term interests. Actual results in arms control negotiations, not anticipation and hope should influence present force structure considerations and these must be tempered by the potential for instability in other areas of the globe which may affect our interests and our security.

Most of present world still unstable

While anticipating constructive changes in Europe, Canada must also recognize that elsewhere in the world, the utility of military force to achieve political goals has not

really diminished. The Middle East, Southern Africa, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, Central America, and South East Asia are cases in point. The increased sophistication and destructiveness of conventional arms and revived concern about the use of biological and chemical weapons coupled with the destabilizing impact of terrorism, the spread of illegal trade in narcotics, the frustration over national debt and economic disparities and the rising nationalism and self-determination movements in Eastern Europe force us to realize that international order is not as assured as some of us would like to think. As we look to the future, we may also see armed conflict over environmental degradation or attempts to ensure adequate supplies of oil and other resources. Except for certain areas where security has been assured by the existence of defensive alliances, our present world is a very unstable planet and the potential threats to international security remain high.

It bears repeating that the first and most important service that a government must provide is the security of the country and its people. Military security is an essential element of that national security. In the case of Canada, the gap between promise and performance is widening and deepening each day.

National Capabilities Eroded

The Government of Canada White Paper of 1987, CHALLENGE AND COMMITMENT, provided a refreshing and long overdue long term plan at very modest cost to ensure that Canada had at least the minimum capability to contribute to the assurance of its own sovereignty, support for its allies and the concept of collective security through NATO, Canada-U.S. agreements and the UN. But, with the budget reduction of 1989, that plan is now in question. Taken together with the reductions in foreign aid, and the resulting reduced military capabilities at home and abroad, these actions sharply reduce Canada's ability to contribute to the achievement of international peace, order and stability and detract from our own sense of national security, sovereignty and independence. While the reductions have been made in the interests of economy and debt reduction, there is no evidence that defence and foreign aid expenditures have been major causes of the debt.

Due to this faulty strategic financial decision, the resultant erosion of our national capabilities will negatively affect our position at home and abroad by precluding the research and development and technology transfers which are needed to improve our economy, our competitive position, and debt recovery.

Not the least of Canada's concerns must be the attitude in the country toward national security and defence through lack of national leadership, the failure of our educational system and citizenship programmes to inculcate the concept of service to the nation and patriotic responsibility in our youth. For a variety of reasons, therefore, the regular and reserve forces have withered and their capabilities are at best marginal. The men and women who serve are the equal of any in the world; it is the number of them and their antiquated equipment which makes them second class militarily. Because a very small proportion of the population is in either the reserve or the regular force, (0.4%, 93rd in the world), the vast majority of Canadians have no contact whatever with the military, no awareness beyond recruiting advertisements. While a recent poll has shown that many are in favour of an increased national security force, there is a general lack of awareness, lack of concern, even active disinterest. This has a direct bearing on citizenship development, pride in service to one's country and the ability of communities and the nation to respond in times of natural disaster or national emergency.

CANADA'S PLACE IN THE WORLD

What Canadians consider to be the rightful place of their country in the world is no longer, if indeed it ever was, assured.

From the earliest times in our history even until the present day, Canadians have had to depend to some important degree upon others for their security. The creation of NATO lessened, in theory at least, our over reliance on any one country. Yet recent events appear to indicate that we are not averse to greater dependence on a single country — the U.S. — for our security. It is puzzling that we Canadians do not find it very disagreeable, shameful or dangerous that we will have to rely increasingly on our southern neighbours and others to tell us what is happening in a large part of our territorial waters.

To a great extent, our international reputation was created after The Second World War during the period sometimes referred to as the "Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy". Since that time many Canadians have taken it for granted that Canada and its policies would find instant favour with the rest of the world, and that our unsolicited advice would be heeded by countries on problems about which we have little special knowledge. But the world has changed much in the past three or four decades and our leadership is not as readily accepted. The number of independent nations has increased dramatically as has their penchant for independent thought and action. Our influence and place in the international arena must constantly be won by performance, and by effective contribution.

The question asking whether Canada is a "Middle Power", a "Principal Power", "the smallest of the large powers", or "the largest of the small powers" is no longer relevant. Increasingly, the question being asked is whether Canada can maintain and enhance its independence while refusing to take actions or allocate resources necessary to ensure security, to exercise sovereignty and play a full partnership role in alliance and bilateral arrangements.

If our leaders continue to refuse to take these necessary actions or to allot the necessary resources, we will find that others will carry out security tasks for us, but in their interests more than ours and at the cost of our sovereignty and independence. Their actions most certainly would not result in an increase of Canadian self-esteem, but would indeed, result in a degradation of our national image. In addition, it is a virtual certainty that not all of the information gained by these external forces would be shared with us, thereby further decreasing our knowledge of what are properly our own affairs. All of this could only reduce our role and influence in a changing but increasingly interdependent world and cause other nations to view Canada more as a protectorate.

THE EVER-CHANGING INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Events such as the recent turmoil in China illustrate how difficult it is to forecast with any accuracy future trends. Yet a certain number of general assumptions can be made and they will serve as guidelines for future assessment of happenings.

- There will likely continue to be an outward relaxation of tensions between East and West, most notably between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Agreement will likely be reached on both nuclear and conventional force reductions, but not to the extent which would allow Canada to consider further reductions in its already greatly under strength armed forces.

- Economic, ethnic and nationality difficulties will continue to plague the U.S.S.R., perhaps to the degree that will lead to the break-up of the Soviet Empire or to the invention of an external problem to divert attention from overwhelming domestic problems.

- European countries belonging to NATO and to the WTO will not permit conventional force reductions of their domestic and offshore reinforcement troops to reach a point at which the other side could not resist temptation.

- Regional conflicts will continue and will be exacerbated by the inability of many, if not all, developing countries to cope with their debt burden. These conflicts will give rise to an increasing demand for United Nations peacekeeping forces and observer missions.

- Where conflicts may ultimately be solved, the solutions are unlikely to mean a reduction in the size of the United Nations peacekeeping force, but rather call for an increase. Additional tasks will involve overseeing the implementation of the political solutions including supervision of elections and transition to democracy in a number of disputed territories — such as is planned to be carried out in Namibia.

- International terrorism will continue and may have to be met with the use of more concerted national and international cooperation and force than is the case at the present. Canada cannot assume that it will be isolated from its direct or indirect effects.

- Environmental degradation on a global scale may be the cause of conflict between and among nations.

- As the world energy supply and demand situation worsens, temptations to act aggressively to assure long lasting supplies may prove hard to resist especially when those supplies are located in remote or undeveloped areas.

- The social scourge of illicit drug trafficking coupled with the potential destabilization of drug producing countries will likely see the increased use of armed forces for both national and international intervention against the narcotics trade.

ACHIEVING SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY FOR CANADA

Canada has never been able to defend itself alone, and it is not within the realm of possibility that we will ever be able to do so.

Our concern for international peace and stability is a concern for survival as Canada is a country located between the two nuclear superpowers; it is also a concern of economic self-interest given our very high dependency on external trade.

The route to national security must therefore lie in providing appropriate levels of military capability to safeguard our own sovereign interests by contributing to the defence of the continent and our western way of life by preventing war and achieving a greater degree of peace through alliances and agreements such as NATO and NORAD and to maintaining international stability through UN peacekeeping, arms control measures and development assistance.

The drastic reductions in defence expenditures and in foreign aid have left Canada in an exceptionally difficult and deteriorating position. In the eyes of our allies, our credibility as a reliable partner has been seriously eroded, with the potential for future long term negative impacts on our political, economic and military influence. Our vulnerability to the incursions of other nations who may wish to use our sovereign territory, seas and airspace has been increased. Our sincerity in the belief that development assistance is an obligation to the future of political and economic stability is questioned.

Within Canada, the very small regular and reserve forces not only severely limit the nation's capacity to respond to the wide range of potential local, national and international emergencies, but also inhibits the level of contribution to national well-being by our young people and reduces their

sense of responsible citizenship. In addition, failure to comprehend the vital need for an industrial base that contributes to secure supplies of critical equipment, and the relationship between that industrial base, research and development competence and national tehnological capabilities, compounds our economic security concerns.

There does not appear to be any correlation between tasks assigned by the Canadian Government to defence and external affairs and the resources allotted to accomplish them. Although the government has stated that the goals of the 1987 White Paper on Defence: CHALLENGE AND COMMITMENT, and the 1988 DEFENCE UPDATE, remain unchanged, it is impossible to see how the assigned roles and missions can be accomplished given the tendency of governments to determine security requirements solely on short-term financial grounds. The gap between promise and provision continues to widen, to the detriment of the nation, important institutions, alliance relationships and others who depend on our support and leadership.

The production of occasional and infrequent white papers by successive governments has contributed to the confusion and uncertainty about Canadian security and defence policies. The longer the period of time between statements of intention, the greater the frustrations caused and the greater the expectations aroused. In place of these occasional documents, what is needed to ensure realism and continuity is an annual assessment of the international security environment which contains the Canadian Strategic Forecast for the following ten year period together with a statement as to how Canada intends to respond to the evolving circumstances.

The strength of the Canadian Armed Forces and the foreign aid budget are now each below tolerable levels. As a result, Canada is seen by the international community to be reneging on promises made solemnly, not only in election campaigns but also in NATO Councils and before the General Assembly of the United Nations. It is nationally embarassing that our representatives in international civilian and military organizations have to apologize because once again a Canadian government unilaterally has decided not to live up to past pledges.

The concern is not one of perception but with reality. We are not concerned about being seen to be equal partners in our defence, it is rather than in some respects we are not partners at all, because we are allowing others to assume too many of our responsibilities. This results in a severe degradation of our security and our sovereignty in some respects. If Canada is to have effective security the Department of National Defence and the Department of External Affairs must be supplied with the resources necessary to ensure that Canada can contribute its fair share to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Canada has had in the past a history of technological achievement of which it can be proud. However the reduction in funds allotted to research and development by both government and industry has led directly to weakness and over-dependency. Now is the time for Canada and Canadian industry to reassert itself and take advantage of the larger markets resulting from recent trade agreements.

The Canadian Armed Fores (regular and reserve) must continue to be tasked to:

- serve as an outward symbol of our continued and oft-exercised determination to take whatever actions are necessary to preserve our democratic way of life
- contribute troops to NATO, NORAD and other North American defence tasks
- exercise sovereignty through surveillance of and control over Canadian territory, airspace, and waters
- contribute to peacekeeping forces and missions
- aid in protection of the environment
- support citizenship development programmes
- respond to civil emergencies in Canada and abroad
- respond to unexpected developments at home and abroad
- continue Search and Rescue responsibilities in Canada

In addition, further tasks that are likely to arise will be in the areas of protection of fisheries and of fishing fleets, pollution control, illegal immigration, and drug smuggling. As these latter subjects are all receiving active attention in the United States it is fair to speculate that if Canada does not become a partner in operations we may well find that the USA will do the job for us — with all the attendant disadvantages for our security and sovereignty.

All of these tasks require vigourous and prompt support by adequate research and development and a vastly improved industrial base. Successive governments have not adequately appreciated the importance to Canada's future competitive position of the research and development and the technological transfers and the civilian spin-offs that accrue from national defence capital programmes. The gaining and maintaining of such expertise will stand Canada in good stead when it may have to meet challenges from both friend and potential foes.

CONCLUSION

The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies (CISS) is concerned that the security and sovereignty of Canada are being eroded due to the lack of adequate strategic analysis and planning and inadequate provision of resources to our armed forces and to our international aid activities.

The members of The Institute hope that the matters set out in this paper will receive from the government and citizens of Canada the rational, responsible attention that they deserve.

In accordance with its objectives, the CISS will continue to inform the public of Canada and its leaders of its concerns about the state of our national security and seek through discussion, dialogue and debate to promote positive improvements in Canada's national security posture.

SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY has been published at this time in order to bring to the fore the serious problems that exist in Canada with regard to national security. The Institute seeks to enlist the support of interested Canadians in furthering its work on subjects of national importance.

For further copies of the brochure or for other information about The Institute please contact:

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